Steps to assist the ailing tea industry

1197. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Darjeeling in Act will help Tea Industry", which appeared in the *Asian Age*, dated the 10th October, 2002;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to address the problem highlighted in the news-item, so as to assist the ailing Tea Industry to compete with neighbouring tea producing countries like Sri Lanka and Nepal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has initiated action to protect Darjeeling tea under various legal frameworks that exist in different importing countries. The Darjeeling tea logo is registered in various countries including UK, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, USA, Japan, Egypt and Canada. The Darjeeling tea word and logo are registered as a Certification Trade Mark in India and would also be registered under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act 1999, once it is operationalised.

(c) While Sri Lankan tea is not similar in character to Darjeeling tea and hence does not pose a direct competition *vis-a-vis* the requirements of the Darjeeling tea in export markets, Nepal tea poses a competitive challenge to Darjeeling tea. The agro-climatic condition, under which Nepal teas are grown, is closer to that of Darjeeling with the added advantage of newer bushes. Darjeeling tea, however, has greater brand value and image and the Government has taken action to protect the brand name legally as well as implement a monitoring system that will address the problem of alleged misuse.

WTO Summit at Doha

†1198. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the USA has expressed its inability to provide concession on the import of garments in the WTO Summit held last year in Doha, which is a deep shock for India and other developing countries;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.